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Linz, Tobacco Factory.

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277 The traditional high quality of Austrian tobacco products is due to the use of high-grade foreign materials, chiefly certain oriental tobaccos. These can never be replaced by inland tobacco, since climate and soil do not permit the growth of similar types here. Nevertheless, the inland cultivation of tobacco is encouraged as much as possible.

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439 The great importance of oriental tobacco to the Tabakregie is shown by the fact that in the course of modernisation of the concern, the important task of tobacco buying was delegated to a branch organisation, the "Austria Einkaufsgenossenschaft der österreichischen Tabakregie im Orient, G. m. b. H., Wien". Its main task was to restore severed connections with the most important tobacco producers in Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey. Hungary, North and South America and the Dutch colonies also formerly supplied raw tobacco to the Austrian Tabakregie, but here there are still difficulties in the way of a restoration of trade which arise from the foreign exchange situation.

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277 The Tabakregie is a very important factor in the Austrian economy. Firstly it acts as a big employer of home labour with an inland sales organisation consisting

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of 8 warehouses, 258 tobacco distributors and 13,253 tobacconists' shops, thus providing a large number of Austrians with a secure livelihood. As the Tabakregie is a valued customer in the tobacco-producing countries compensation transactions are made possible for other home industries through its foreign dealings. Even during the first months of reconstruction (April to December, 1945) the Tabakregie contributed in taxes about 10 per cent of the total state revenues. In 1946 it provided about a third of these revenues (corporation taxes about 30 per cent and customs dues over 40 per cent), despite decreased production. A rise in output will certainly mean a considerable increase in these figures. It must also be mentioned that Tabakregie exports brought in over 55 million schillings in the year 1933, and that they should therefore play an important rôle in stabilising finances as soon as foreign markets are reopened.

The staff of the Tabakregie varies according to available supplies of raw materials and depends on the preferences and satisfaction of the smoker. In the year 1937, the concern employed 5421 workers, including 3912 women, and at the end of 1947, 2930 workers, of whom 1581 were women. The dwindling of the number of workers is only in a minor degree due to the effects of the war. The main reason must be sought for in the decrease in cigar consumption which has been in progress for some time. The smoker of today is turning more and more to the cheaper type of cigarette which is quickly consumed. The cigar is one of the victims of our hustling and mechanical age. Cigar production, which depends mostly on manual labour, is on the decline, while the cigarette, which is produced entirely by machinery, is becoming more popular. This explains the reduced number of employees. It may increase one day again, if people find time in more leisured days to blow heavy smoke rings from fat cigars.

At all events, the Austrian Tobacco Monopoly is doing its best to see that the smoker is well supplied at all times with his needs, which are those of so large a section of the community.

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INDUSTRY

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- TEXTILES
- GLASS
- LEATHER

INDUSTRY

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- TOBACCO
- SUGAR
- BEER

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